

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WASHOE COUNTY HIT HARD BY FLU – VACCINE STILL AVAILABLE AT DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Reno, NV – Flu has definitely arrived in Washoe County, especially during the holiday break. According to local emergency rooms, testing facilities and local physicians, hundreds of people have recently been seen for flu-like symptoms. It is not too late for the flu vaccine to provide protection this season. The Washoe County District Health Department (DHD) strongly recommends that residents make the effort to prevent the spread of influenza and other respiratory illnesses.

Flu vaccine is still available at the DHD, and District Health Officer, Mary A. Anderson, MD, MPH strongly urges everyone to take personal responsibility and practice good hygiene as a first line defense. “I encourage you to wash your hands frequently and to cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Also, people with flu-like symptoms should stay home to avoid infecting co-workers or classmates.” Dr. Anderson also suggests that parents teach young children how long to wash their hands by scrubbing with soap and warm water while reciting the alphabet. “Children seem to be more able to bring home an illness, including the flu, and share it with the entire family.” The District Health Department strongly suggests that you have your children vaccinated.

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FLU SEASON HITS HARD

2-2-2-2-2-2

Preventive measures during the flu season include:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- Staying home from work and school when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. Always wash your hands before eating.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

People who are unsure whether or not they would be categorized in a high priority group, such as the elderly, or someone with other underlying health issues should contact their health care providers.

Flu season typically peaks in the United States between December and March. Because each season is unpredictable, it is not known how severe the 2005-2006 season might be.

To learn more about influenza, please visit the following websites: www.washoecounty.us/flu or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/flu. For more information about local flu clinics, please call 328-2427. The DHD offers vaccinations Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and will be closed on January 2nd for the New Year's Holiday.